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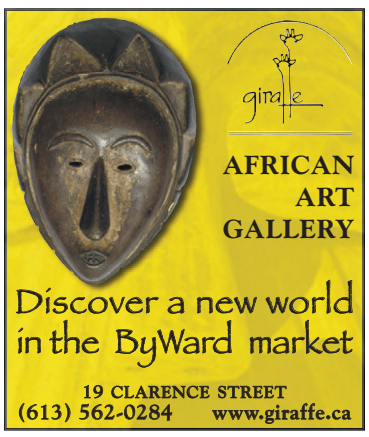

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Transit options considered

TIM WIECLAWSKI
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If the OC Transpo strike goes on any longer, people just might end up driving down the Transitway.

"There is a significant amount of interest in making this a reality, seeing what the blocks are and ways to overcome those problems to make it a safe and convenient alternative," Mayor Larry O'Brien yesterday.

The 2,300 striking OC Transpo employees will vote on the city's latest contract offer tomorrow at the Ottawa Civic Centre.

Union representatives are predicting it will be overwhelmingly rejected, which could further extend the strike, already in its fifth week.

In a special meeting to discuss the strike, city council voted to examine a variety of transportation strategies, including vehicular traffic on the Transitway, enhancing taxi service and creating parking incentives for carpoolers.

O'Brien said the motions passed yesterday were just the beginning of the alternate transportation arrangements the city will come up with if the strike continues.

John Manconi, the city's general manager of public works, said opening the Transitway needs to be very carefully analyzed.

"It's never been done in the 25 years of operation," he said. "We need to ensure that it's going to be safe, it's going to work and it's going to help the broader community."

The key challenge, said Manconi, is relieving congestion in the downtown core and the roads leading into the city. As traffic slows in the core, it causes a ripple effect throughout the city.

The city is considering credits and other possibilities for people who bought December bus passes. Deputy city manager Nancy Schepers said they are looking into what to do about the transit levy and what they can do to entice riders back when the strike is over. City staff will report on the options next Wednesday.

MORE COVERAGE P2

Military hearing told of alleged shooting

PETAWAWA A witness reported seeing Capt. Robert Semrau fire at a severely injured, unarmed Taliban fighter after an ambush in October, a military hearing was told yesterday.

A synopsis of events introduced at the hearing and agreed upon by the military prosecution and defence lawyers gave the first detailed glimpse of the circumstances that led to the 35-year-old Canadian Armed Forces officer being charged with second-degree murder.

Capt. Robert Semrau

It was read at a hearing into whether Semrau, a member of the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment, should be released from custody until he stands trial. Military Judge Lt.- Col. Louis Vincent reserved his decision until today. The charge has provoked controversy because it was laid more than two months after the death of the Taliban fighter in Afghanistan on Oct. 19.

The statement of events, which has not been proven in court, said Semrau was the only soldier in the "proximity" of the wounded insurgent when two shots were heard, and a witness will testify later he saw Semrau fire at the Taliban fighter, who had been disarmed.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Celebrity Buzz pg 14

Gallagher used to be 'hooligan'

Travel pg 9

Day trip to Chernobyl?

Entertainment pg 12

Fake or not to fake: Accents

ShareYourViews
ottawaletters@metronews.ca

All seasons **Catchin' slack**

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Zoltan Stewart, 21, finds a way to keep his longboarding skills sharp — even in the middle of winter. The Ottawa resident did some slack lining in Confederation Park yesterday afternoon.

Ont. union's proposal labelled anti-Semitic by Jewish community

BOYCOTT A proposal by the president of the largest union in the province to boycott Israeli academics at Ontario universities is being labelled as anti-Semitic and an affront to civil liberties by prominent members of Canada's Jewish community.

"CUPE has no business boycotting academics, whether they are Israeli or Jewish," said Avi Benlolo, president of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre. "It goes against the grain of academia."

On Friday, CUPE Ontario president Sid Ryan called for the boycott of Israeli academics and educators who do not condemn the Dec. 29 bombing of the Islamic University in Gaza and "the assault on Gaza in general."

B'nai Brith Canada called on CUPE National to distance itself from CUPE Ontario and conduct an operational review in light of what they call a "vehemently anti-Israel agenda."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Free Daily News Group Inc., operating as Metro Ottawa 130 Slater Street, Suite 300, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6E2. Publisher: Bill McDonald

Dig deep for March of Dimes
March of Dimes' 58th annual fundraising campaign in Ottawa is underway. The goal for Ottawa is to raise more than $100,000, which goes toward providing assistance to people with disabilities through the purchase of equipment such as bath aids, canes, crutches and walkers. METRO OTTAWA

Local

Cops to stop unsafe drivers

The city's Selective Traffic Enforcement Program has released its 2009 schedule. Each month throughout the year, police officers will be targeting two traffic violations, with officers cracking down on drivers who follow too closely and fail to stop for stop signs in January. Other initiatives include catching drivers who perform unsafe lane changes, run red lights, speed and fail to yield to buses. METRO OTTAWA

News in brief

CRASH Two people suffered minor injuries during a west-end collision yesterday. At 11 a.m., a motor vehicle collision occurred at the intersection of Castlefrank Road and Tamblyn Crescent.

INJURY A female pedestrian suffered minor injuries after being struck by a car in Westboro yesterday afternoon.

WARNING With many students depending on carpools to get back to class, police are reminding carpool drivers and passengers to continue to exercise due diligence during the strike to ensure their personal safety.

TRIAL A judicial pre-trial has been held to prepare for the upcoming court case of Ottawa Mayor Larry O'Brien. The mayor's lawyers and Crown prosecutors met behind closed doors with a Superior Court judge Monday. The mayor was not in attendance.

SNOWSTORM Up to 20 cm of snow was expected to start falling around 3 a.m. today. Environment Canada meteorologist Geoff Coulson said the snow should come down pretty heavy until late tonight, then ease up for the next couple of days with a light but steady snowfall until Friday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Nanotechnology creates smell-free socks and germ-free toilets at **metronews.ca/canada**

Video Jim Flaherty previews budget measures to boost the economy at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries
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Daily Keno: 9, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 24, 27, 29, 39 40, 42, 45, 52, 58, 59, 62, 63, 65, 66
These results are not official.

Public support in favour of city

Survey conducted for city hall shows 70% side with gov't position

TIM WIECLAWSKI
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

Close to 70 per cent of Ottawa residents feel the issues in the transit strike are important enough that they would rather put up with the strike for another month than see the city back down, according to a recently conducted Harris/Decima survey.

The $35,000 survey was conducted for the City of Ottawa, and polled 816 people from across the city.

"The main point that we should take away from this is that people, broadly speaking, support the position the city has taken and want the city to hold firm to what they've put forth as a proposal to the union," said Harris/Decima senior vice-president Jeff Walker.

Walker said the survey revealed residents have a very keen interest in the issue — more than any municipal issue in the last few years.

> **"The main point ... is that people, broadly speaking, support the position the city has taken."**
> Jeff Walker, pollster

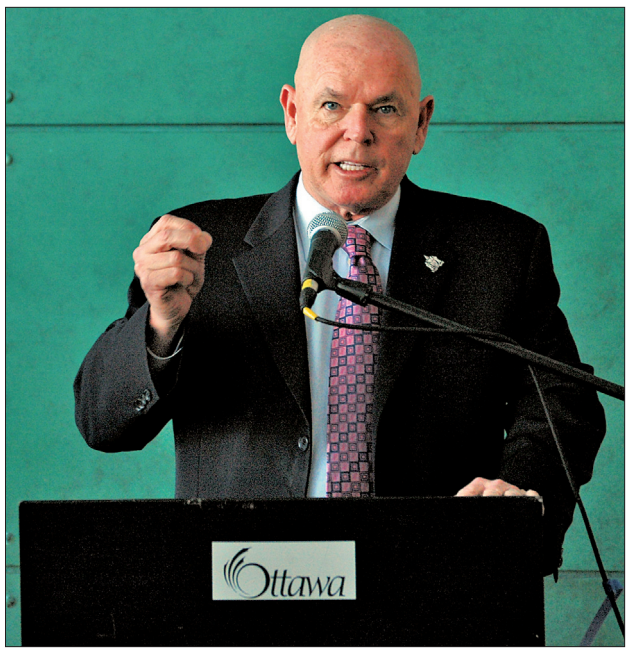
He said support for the city was higher than most labour disputes about which they surveyed.

Walker said they worked hard to make the poll as balanced as possible and deal strictly with whether they believed the city's offer and what the union was demanding was reasonable or not.

"I don't think all residents necessarily know chapter and verse about the elements of the offer, but it's clear the more they know about what's on the table, the more likely they are to see the city's position as reasonable," he said.

Results from the survey were quickly dismissed by president of the Ottawa and District Labour Council, Sean McKenny.

"Now we're hearing that our city council has recently hired a polling firm to gauge public reaction and are basing their next steps on opinion polls. Not the issues, but rather opinion polls. It's absolutely appalling," he said.



TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

Speaking at city hall yesterday, Mayor Larry O'Brien said the poll confirms residents are informed on the issue and support the city.

Community says bridge over Kettle Island still best

BRIDGE Presidents of nine east-end community associations will reaffirm their support for Kettle Island as the preferred location for an east-end bridge today.

After the National Capital Commission released its final recommendation stating Kettle Island as the best location for a bridge over the Ottawa River earlier this week, members of nine community associations will be signing and presenting a letter of intent to Orleans councillors today.

Along with a petition with more than 3,000 signatures and a letter of intent signed by councillors Bob Monette, Rainer Bloess and Rob Jellett last July, the latest letter "makes a strong statement that Kettle Island is the best location for the bridge," Monette said.

Located off the National Capital Commission Parkway, the crossing at Kettle Island will take truck traffic out of the downtown core, while having the smallest effect on commuter traffic in the Orleans community, said Monette.

The report assessed 10 potential crossing sites for a bridge, tunnel or ferry, concluding that a bridge at Kettle Island was the best option.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

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Transit strike results in winter cycling renaissance

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

Peter Blanchard used to take the bus to work.

But since the transit strike began more than a month ago, the Ottawa resident has rediscovered winter cycling.

"I haven't done serious winter cycling since I was a teen," he said.

So far, there have been no problems.

"I go slower than I would on dry roads and take the back roads," said Blanchard, who's been pedalling through the snow from Centretown to downtown every day.

Although Blanchard believes the city has suffered a loss through the strike, the founder of Greenottawa.ca is pleased so many people have decided to explore environmentally friendly alternatives.

> **"I haven't done serious winter cycling since I was a teen."**
> Peter Blanchard

"I certainly think people have been doing their best to cope," said Blanchard.

Before the strike began, Julien Lamarthe was a three-seasons cyclist.

But recently, the Ottawa resident bought a mountain bike and acquired winter cycling clothes so he can bike from his home in Chinatown to downtown.

"The irony of it is that the busiest roads that are the clearest," he said.

John Manconi, the city's general manager of public works, said yesterday the city has been working to maintain bike paths as well as monitoring usage.

Winter cycling has worked out well for Lamarthe, who previously bought bus tickets. So well, he plans on cycling long after drivers go back to work.

"I might still take the bus to go to remote locations, but I'll bike for getting to work and running errands," he said.

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LCA-08-0009

Canadians stuck in Gaza for at least one more day
A number of Canadians will have to wait at least another day in the Gaza Strip because of unsafe conditions before they can make their way into Israel, officials said yesterday. CBC NEWS ONLINE 3

Canada

Committee created to fix credit crunch

Government, bank officials working together

A new working group of bank and government officials is being asked to immediately begin looking at ways to make loans more accessible to Canadian consumers and business, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said yesterday.

"We all have responsibilities to ensure that the financial system functions properly in support of the Canadian economy and certainly the government has a role to play in that. I encourage the heads of banks, the CEOs, to work with the government," he said before heading into pre-budget consultations.

It was Flaherty's first comment on a meeting he and Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney held behind closed doors with bank CEOs in Toronto on Monday.

The newly minted working group is a response to complaints by Flaherty and provincial treasurers about the difficulties that business and consumers are experiencing obtaining credit during the current upheaval in financial markets.

CHRISTINNE MUSCHI/REUTERS

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty spoke with the media yesterday in Montreal about supporting the Canadian economy.

But the major banks have resisted calls for them to ease credit availability, contending other lenders — not the banks — have reduced loans. Flaherty said yesterday that the CEOs told him as much Monday.

The new public-private working group will be composed of representatives from the big banks, the finance department and the Bank of Canada, an aide to Flaherty said. However, no other details on the working group's agenda were available and the Canadian Bankers Association had no comment on the project.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tory keeps his Tories guessing

POLITICS Progressive Conservative Leader John Tory is keeping his party guessing about his political future.

Asked yesterday whether Tory plans to remain at the PC helm, party president Ken Zeise said: "I don't know."

"I'm hoping he stays, yes, and I'm hoping that circumstances allow that," Zeise said in an interview from Florida.

Those in the 25-member caucus are also in the dark.

"Who knows what he's going to do? He hasn't told us," confided a veteran Conservative MPP, who is loyal to the leader.

Tory, who has been without a seat in the legislature since losing Don Valley West in the Oct. 10, 2007, provincial election, has promised to disclose his plans on Friday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Hospital study leads to lawsuit

HEALTH A former patient is suing a Toronto hospital that published a study describing how sinks were responsible for the spread of a drug-resistant bacteria in its intensive-care unit.

Researchers at the Toronto General Hospital found the location and design of sinks in the ICU led to the spread of pseudomonas aeruginosa in the ward. The details of their discovery were outlined in this month's Journal of Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology.

12 deaths

- The outbreak between December 2004 and March 2006, left 12 dead, and sickened two dozen others.

Ronald Sherman, 69, the plaintiff, was one of those who became sick. He was admitted to Toronto General in November 2005 with severe pneumonia, which worsened, according to the claim, when he became infected with pseudomonas.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

ST. JOHN'S City council in Newfoundlad and Labrador's capital has passed a motion banning new drive-thrus at restaurants unless owners can prove the lineups won't overflow into city streets.

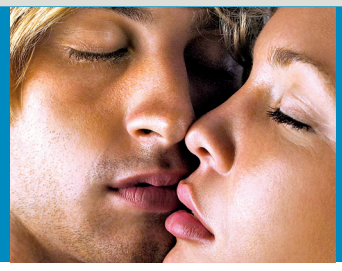
EDMONTON A man found guilty of the brutal slaying of 13-year-old Nina Courtepatte has won an appeal conviction. The Alberta Court of Appeal released a decision yesterday that states Joseph Laboucan will face another trial for the April 2005 rape and murder of Courtepatte, who was found dead on a west-end golf course.

METRO NEWS SERVICE

Ex-Nepali 'slave girls' demand rehabilitation

Hundreds of Nepali girls, rescued after being sold off by their poor parents as domestic help, marched in Kathmandu yesterday demanding rehabilitation-like jobs and an education, activists said. Traditionally, girls as young as six from the ethnic Tharu community in west Nepal were "sold" by their parents for as little as 1,500 Nepali rupees ($20 US). REUTERS

World



Hormone helps recognition

The "love hormone" linked to feelings of sexual pleasure, bonding and maternal care also appears to help us recognize familiar faces, Swiss researchers said. Men given oxytocin — involved in nursing and childbirth — more accurately recalled images of familiar faces. But the hormone did not help them recognize inanimate objects. REUTERS

Pressure on Israel mounts

Israeli shelling killed more than 40 Palestinians yesterday at a UN school where civilians had taken shelter. the latest carnage is likely to boost international pressure on Israel to halt a Gaza offensive.

The Israeli army accused Hamas of using civilians as "human shields" and said its troops had fired mortars at the premises after gunmen mortared their positions from inside al-Fakhora school. Witnesses said two shells exploded outside the school, killing at least 42 civilians and wounding dozens.

Within hours, Egypt, backed by European powers, proposed an immediate ceasefire and talks that could address Israel's demands that Hamas be starved of weapons.

The attacks prompted U.S. president-elect Barack Obama to break his silence, saying civilian deaths were "a source of deep concern" for him, but that only the current administration will speak on U.S. foreign policy until he is sworn in. REUTERS

Israel reacts

- Israel said yesterday it will set up a "humanitarian corridor" to allow Gazans periodic access to vital goods.
- An Israeli ambassador said late yesterday it plans to take Egypt's truce proposal "very, very seriously."

Mexico **Awareness tour**

HENRY ROMERO / REUTERS

Antonio Tomaselli, 30, rides his bike yesterday in Mexico City. Tomaselli started a bike tour eight months ago in northern Alaska, making his way through Canada and the United States, to bring attention to violence against women.

News in brief

UNREST China faces surging protests this year, a state-run magazine said in a blunt warning of the hazards to Communist Party control because of a sharp economic downturn. Faltering growth could spark anger among millions of migrant workers and university graduates left jobless. REUTERS

Indian PM slams Pakistani inaction in solving attack

NEW DELHI Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh accused Pakistan yesterday of acting irresponsibly, saying November's Mumbai attacks must have had support from some of its neighbour's official agencies.

Pakistan rejected the accusation as unacceptable, saying India had embarked on a propaganda offensive and such charges jeopardised chances of co-operation against terrorism.

Singh's comments were a sign that New Delhi has become increasingly frustrated at what it sees as Islamabad's slowness at identifying and arresting the attack's planners.

India blames Pakistan militants for the organized strikes by 10 gunmen in November that killed 179 people. REUTERS

Site makes inaugural style easy

STYLE Andrew Jones confesses he is the last person you would turn to for fashion advice, but his new website launched last month allows women to register which gown they will wear to dozens of dinners and balls being held in conjunction with Barack Obama's swearing in as the next U.S. president.

Jones, who has a banking background, said he got the idea for dressregistry.com several years ago from his more fashion-conscious wife. REUTERS

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Comment

Give banks some credit

Despite war of words, stats show loans are still flowing

MoneyMatters

Charles Davies
Veteran Business Writer

Even the Bank of Canada admitted in its December financial system review that "credit growth ... has generally been sustained throughout the crisis."

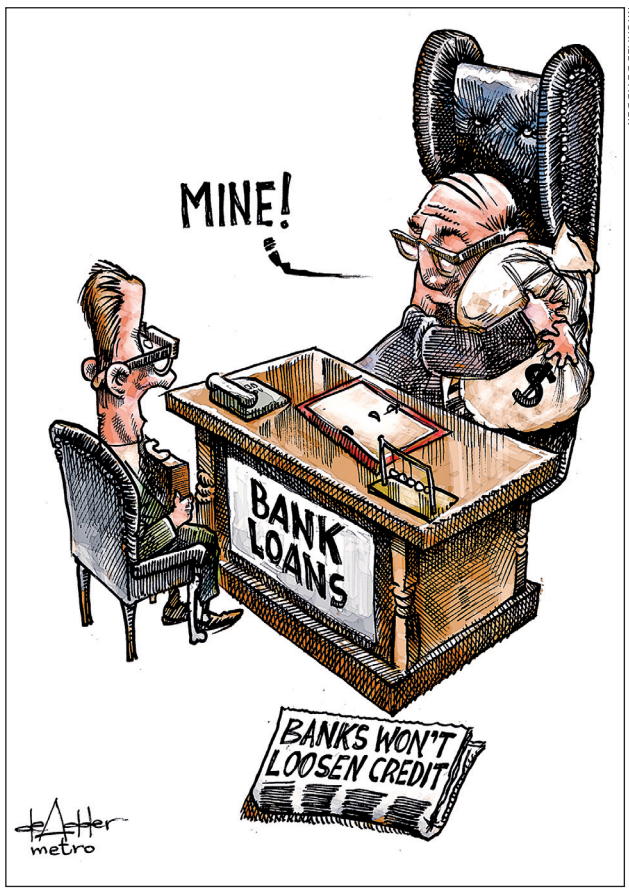
As a onetime inmate of the Canadian banking system, I can tell you from first-hand experience that bankers are prone to excesses and lapses in judgement. The bank I worked for — one of the Big Five — has long had an eerie proficiency at messing up, finding itself covered in goo after the bursting of every financial bubble in recent decades. Banks are also the institutions we love to hate. We may need them, but there's always that sense that, like the unreconstructed Scrooge, they are gouging us.

But are they turning us away in our hour of economic crisis? If you believe Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, the banks are shutting off the lending taps just when we need credit most. The banks are charged with sopping up the liquidity that Ottawa and the Bank of Canada has provided to stimulate lending and using it to strengthen their own balance sheets. A war of words has been waged between the two sides since early December, and this week Flaherty and Carney called top bankers in for a meeting to apply direct pressure.

On the evidence, Flaherty and Carney don't have much of a case. Using the Bank of Canada's own statistics, Toronto Dominion Bank argued recently that loans have kept flowing through the crisis. From September to November, household credit was up more than 12 per cent year to year while business credit rose 13.4 per cent — hardly suggesting a credit squeeze. It's also been noted that Canadian banks made up some of the difference as foreign banks and auto financing arms fled the market. Even the Bank of Canada admitted in its December financial system review that "credit growth ... has generally been sustained throughout the crisis."

Banks could be forgiven if they were a whole lot tighter. Ironically, Ottawa's bank regulator, the Office of Superintendent of Financial Institutions, has been signalling that it may raise regulatory capital requirements this year, a good reason to hoard cash. Besides, in a weak economy, banks normally become more scrupulous lenders and boost reserves because there's a greater likelihood of loan defaults. That's only prudent, given that the banks' first responsibility is to assure viable operations in order to protect depositors' funds. Staying healthy also helps preserve shareholder value which affects a majority of Canadians who, directly or indirectly, own bank stock. What's good for them is at least partly what's good for most of us.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer and editor who has worked for news organizations and publications including Business Week, Canadian Business, Report On Business magazine, Reuters, and Financial Post.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

Lives cut short in Gaza

The Israelis have been bombing the Gaza Strip continuously and at such a rapid rate that everyone is just in utter shock.

How can they even think about dropping bombs and missiles on these innocent people, especially the children?

These children still haven't had a chance to see anything in the world.

EMAN KADRI, CALGARY

Word on the street: What's your new year's resolution — and have you already broken it?

Karl Brook
age 21, Ottawa
A: I haven't broken it yet. My resolution was to work out once a week and I've still got two more days to get a workout in.

Melodie Cardin
age 23, Ottawa
A: I haven't, but I expect to soon. My new year's resolution was to wash the dishes right away after I eat. So far, so good.

Sasha MacWhirter
age 20, Ottawa
A: I'm just trying to live a healthy lifestyle every day, but I guess I just broke it by eating French fries.

Michelle Richardson
age 36, Ajax
A: To save a heck of a lot more than I have in the past. I started over the holidays, putting a limit on each gift. I've stuck to that.

Thomas Ly
age 35, Toronto
A: Winning the 649! I bought my ticket, so I've done my part. I've got my fingers crossed.

Jen Galligan
age 43, Calgary
A: Mine is to hopefully drop 20 pounds. So far, I'm sticking to it. That's one resolution I can say I didn't break.

Zach Pipes
age 19, Calgary
A: I didn't really make any this year. I never went along with it for the last two years I made them ... so what's the point?

Simon Kursa
age 31, Edmonton
A: I wanted to make sure I do yoga or go to the gym at least three times a week, and I haven't broken it yet.

Rick Park
age 27, Halifax
A: I'm going to run a marathon. Today, I'm going to the gym with my friends – it's my fourth day at the gym.

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: ottawaletters@metronews.ca
Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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New year's detox — for your cellphone
Maybe it's time for a post-holiday detox? An Australian survey commissioned by Virgin Mobile shows 86 per cent of cellphone users collect numbers of people they don't really know, usually when tipsy or at work-related functions. **REUTERS**

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Apple **Musical evolution**

REUTERS/ROBERT GALBRAITH

Philip Schiller, senior vice-president of worldwide product marketing at Apple Inc., announced at the Macworld Convention and Expo 2009 in San Francisco yesterday that the company's iTunes music service will now be digital rights management (DRM) free and available through its iPhone.

Markets buck that gloomy feeling

Despite a seemingly endless tide of bad economic news and forecasts, Canadian stocks experienced a sixth straight day of gains yesterday.

The recent rally on the TSX has raised the index 14 per cent from its pre-Christmas woes.

Having closed yesterday at 9,472.09 points, the market lows of November (when the TSX dropped to 7,724.76 points) seem to be fading into the past.

But with war in the Middle East and the national economic outlook even grimmer today than three months ago, many remain weary of branding this recent rally as a return to the bullish days of yore.

"From a macroeconomic point of view, we do still have job losses ahead of us and we'll certainly see the Canadian economy struggle throughout the first few months of 2009," says James Marple, economic forecaster with TD Economics.

On Monday, Canadian bank and commodity stocks led the way for a modest gain in the index. But those gains came on the same day Canadian automakers said sales had plunged 21.2 per cent.

Monday's gains on the TSX showed a growing pattern in recent weeks on both Bay and Wall Streets: the markets seem to be rallying on days filled with poor economic data.

David Rosenberg, economist with Merrill Lynch in New York City, said in a report: "As economists keen on assessing the markets, we have to say that we find it absolutely fascinating that since equities bottomed on Nov. 20, the Dow has managed to rack up 1,482 rally points. And they all managed to come on days when the data could hardly have been worse." **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

More U.S. rallies

- Strength in the tech sector boosted U.S. stocks yesterday, overshadowing data showing slumping factory orders and dismal pending home sales.

Obama says deficit could reach $1T US

ECONOMY U.S. president-elect Barack Obama said yesterday that he expects to inherit a U.S. budget deficit approaching $1 trillion US and that his administration would have to make some tough budget choices.

Speaking after meeting members of his economic team, Obama said it was possible that trillion-dollar deficits could stretch into coming years and that he and his team want to instill a "sense of responsibility" about future budget choices.

Obama is contemplating large tax cuts of about $300 billion and potentially as much, if not more, in infrastructure projects and other spending to try to jolt the economy out of recession.

REUTERS

Rogers wireless strong, but cable falters in Q4

TELECOM Rogers Communications Inc. posted strong wireless subscriber growth yesterday, but said its weak cable results point to a tough economy.

Rogers said it added 199,000 net wireless subscribers in the traditionally strong fourth quarter, up from 183,000 a year earlier.

Rogers said it sold about 130,000 of Apple Inc.'s iPhones in the three months ended Dec. 31. It also said that of the total wireless subscribers it added, 158,000 were in the postpaid market, matching year-earlier results.

Rogers added just 4,000 basic cable subscribers, down from 20,000 in the year-earlier period, and gained 61,000 digital cable subscribers, flat from a year earlier.

Chairman and acting chief executive Alan Horn noted that the numbers "reflect the challenging economic backdrop." **REUTERS**

Market reaction

- Rogers' shares slid $1.44, or 3.9 per cent, to $35.75 in Toronto yesterday.

Air hostesses fired over weight

DISMISSALS State-run carrier Air India sacked 10 air hostesses for being "exceptionally overweight," a spokesman said yesterday.

The staff had been grounded for two or three years and were sacked after a medical board declared them unfit for duty. The airline says they were given ample opportunity to shed weight.

A spokesman confirmed some of the air hostesses had approached the New Delhi High Court for a legal challenge, which was later thrown out.

This is not the first time the airline has sacked employees for being overweight, he added. **REUTERS**

Business in brief

SUPPORT The Church of England published prayers to help comfort Britons who lost their jobs in the financial crisis. "Hear me as I cry out in confusion, help me think clearly, and calm my soul," says the Prayer on Being Made Redundant. Also penned is the Prayer for Those Remaining in the Workplace. As many as 600,000 Britons could lose their jobs this year.

DISPUTE Russian gas export body Gazprom sharply cut gas flows to Europe via Ukraine in a worsening of a pricing dispute with Kiev that threatened to disrupt supplies as far west as Italy and Germany. Gazprom said it delivered 65 million cubic metres, down 78 per cent from the 300 mcm shipped since the dispute began Jan. 1. **REUTERS**

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Brees named AP NFL Offensive Player of the Year

New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees won The Associated Press 2008 NFL Offensive Player of the Year award yesterday. Brees threw for 5,069 yards and 34 touchdowns this season, coming up only 15 yards short of Dan Marino's all-time single season record for passing yardage. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Beckham makes AC debut

David Beckham made his AC Milan debut yesterday in a friendly against Hamburg SV in Dubai. Beckham has joined the Serie A club on short loan from the Los Angeles Galaxy to keep in shape and stay in contention for the England team during the MLS off-season. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

Economy strikes NBA

Quietly, but surely, NBA clubs have been discounting seats for their games in recent weeks.

It's a delicate, unprecedented strategy — created, of course, by the economic crisis — and it's become commonplace throughout the NBA, including Canada, where the Toronto Raptors are suffering through a lamentable, losing season.

Despite the discounts, attendance figures throughout the NBA are plummeting. Empty seats are sometimes outnumbering those with kiesters in them. And NBA executives are so concerned, sources tell Metro, they've called an emergency meeting, to be held in Phoenix next week.

NBA commissioner David Stern has issued a gag order on the meeting but a league exec told Metro: "There's a fear that our fans can't afford or won't keep paying what they've paid in the past for tickets. So next week's meeting is critical."

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

Best guess: The NBA soon will announce a decrease in ticket prices across the board.

• The NBA's problems here are unquestionably complicated by the fact that some of the Raptors' games are carried on TSN2, which is not available on the country's — and Toronto's — largest cable carrier. Rogers is depriving Canadian basketball fans by excluding TSN2 from its menu, and industry sources suspect its motive is at least partly attributed to its desire to see less competition for its own all-sports network, Rogers Sportsnet.

Whatever, it's a sad and silly situation. And, last Friday, TSN2 drew a mere 18,000 viewers for a Raptors-Houston Rockets game.

That's pathetic, considering that many Raps games on the main TSN network attract audiences of around 200,000.

• Speaking of Houston, ex-Raps star Tracy McGrady is upsetting Rick Adelman these days. The Rockets' coach suspects the 6-foot-8 guard has been dogging it on occasion. "Tracy's been very unaggressive at times," Adelman said. "He can't keep playing like this or we just won't be any good."

• The CFL's first major surprise of the year has come in the first week of the year.

Toronto native Mike Benevides — despite receiving a multiyear head-coaching offer that sources figured he would gladly accept from the beleaguered Argonauts — has elected to stay on as the B.C. Lions' defensive co-ordinator. "Can't figure it out," an Argos source said yesterday. "The guy (Benevides) all but officially signed. We're puzzled. Are we this undesirable?"

• CFLers such as B.C. defensive lineman Cameron Wake, Edmonton Eskimos offensive lineman Patrick Kabongo and Calgary Stampeders long snapper Pat MacDonald have been impressing NFL types during recent workouts and may be close to bolting to the bigger and better-paying league.

And Greg Marshall has jumped from his longtime position as defensive co-ordinator of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers to become the Hamilton Tiger-Cats' defensive co-ordinator.

Camby to NY?

• NBA sources tell Metro sports columnist Marty York that a three-way trade could be imminent, with ex-Raptor Marcus Camby returning to the New York Knicks from the Los Angeles Clippers and the Knicks sending forward David Lee to the Portland Trail Blazers.

Sports in brief

NHL St. Louis Blues forward Paul Kariya underwent successful hip surgery yesterday and will be sidelined indefinitely. Kariya, 34, has played in only 11 contests this season, and not since a Nov. 5 game against Anaheim. He has two goals and 15 points this season.

NBA Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony will miss three to four weeks after a visit with a hand specialist confirmed he has a non-displaced metacarpal fracture in his right hand. Anthony suffered the injury during Monday's victory over Indiana. METRO NEWS SERVICES

A biting loss for Senators

NHL RESULT

Senators 2 Sabres 4

VS

THE SKINNY: Jarkko Ruutu allegedly bit the Sabres' Andrew Peters on the hand during a first period skirmish, and Buffalo held on to defeat the Senators by a pair, handing Ottawa another road loss.

THE QUOTE: "The last time I saw that was in boxing ... Tyson-Holyfield," said Peters.

THE REBUTTAL: "His finger was in my mouth but I didn't bite it," said Ruutu.

TWO IN THIRTY-TWO: With Buffalo ahead 3-0, Jason Spezza scored two goals in a span of 32 seconds for Ottawa midway through the middle frame to narrow the Sabres lead to 3-2.

THE PLAYOFF SPOT: With the loss, the Senators are 13 points behind the eighth place Sabres and the last playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

THE NEXT GAME: Ottawa plays one more road game at Boston tomorrow night before returning home to Scotiabank Place for the first time since Dec. 20. MIKE BEASLEY/FOR METRO OTTAWA

RICK STEWART/GETTY IMAGES

Andrew Peters of the Sabres reacts after allegedly being bitten on the hand by Jarkko Ruutu last night.

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New Cadillac at auto show

General Motors announced this week that the 2010 Cadillac SRX will go on display at the 2009 North American International Auto Show in Detroit later this month. The floundering firm is hoping the car's new design and improved features will help it better compete with other luxury rivals.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

BMW's small wonder

Compact sports coupe makes room for more fun

JIM KERR
for Metro Canada

BMW's 135i coupe may be its smallest model, but the features are anything but pint-sized.

BMW's 1-series is a compact 2+2 sports car available in both coupe and cabriolet form. This is the smallest BMW but great things can come in small packages and the 1-series certainly fits that description. Two models are offered. Both the 128i and the 135i come with a 3.0 litre 24 valve DOHC in-line six cylinder engine, but the 135i gets a little boost in horsepower with the addition of twin turbochargers and an intercooler. I took a 135i coupe out for a drive to experience the power and came back smiling about the complete package.

Outside, the 135i has BMW's traditional twin kidney shaped grille but in a smaller form, putting more emphasis on the large air intakes across the bottom of the front facia. A sharp bodyline starts at the headlights between the junction of the hood and the front fender and runs straight back the length of the body separating the car's greenhouse area from the lower body.

A chrome strip runs above the frameless door glass and rear side glass, highlighting the coupe's roofline. Black trim on the B-pillar provides the illusion of a longer side glass, but when viewed directly from the side, the short rear window and trunk lid are obvious. A rear spoiler is integrated into the trunk lid design.

Inside, front seat room is great but rear seat and headroom are limited. The front bucket seats slide forward for rear seat access, but entry is best left for agile friends. Our coupe came with the optional sport bucket seats. This $800 option gives 12-way adjustment to both front buckets, with manual control of height, tilt, fore/aft, recline and thigh support. Power side bolsters allow the seat sides to adjust to the driver's profile.

A cup holder is attached to the passenger side of the console. Although it may work well, this is the most ridiculous cup holder I have ever seen and it would be the first thing I would have removed from the car.

The dash gauges are large and round while the rest of the dash is conservative and uncluttered. A navigation system with idrive control is optional. The important features for the driver are the start button on the dash and the six speed shifter between the seats.

'09 BMW 135i coupe

Type: Compact sports car
Price: $41,700 MSRP
Engine: 3.0L twin turbo inline 6 cylinder
HP: 300 hp@5,800 rpm

Highlights

- Sport seats
- Automatic dual zone climate control
- Stability control
- Tilt/telescopic steering

The six-cylinder twin turbo engine comes to life with a muted rumble and gets the adrenaline flowing. Maximum torque starts at only 1,400 rpm, so the car pulls smoothly away from a stop sign and doesn't tire you out in stop and go driving. Step firmly on the gas pedal and the engine feels like it would pull strong forever. Stability control and traction control help keep the rear 245/35R18 inch rubber under control.

Inside, the dash gauges are large and round, while the rest of the dash is conservative and uncluttered.

This is a performance car with 300 horsepower in a 1530 kg body and it has brakes to match the power. It is nimble on corners and feels effortless to drive even when pushing it hard. It is also surprisingly economical on fuel, which is good because it likes to sip Premium grade. The direct fuel injection and variable cam timing enable 7.9 litres/100 km on the highway.

A six speed automatic transmission with paddle shifters is available for drivers that don't want to shift the manual gearbox, but I found the manual shifter excellent and the clutch has a nice progressive engagement.

Introduced in Canada in 2008, the 1-series BMW has been sold in Europe since 2004. It's a shame we didn't get it here sooner because it is so much fun to drive.

AWD returns to Matrix

LORNE DRURY
for Metro Canada

The Cambridge, Ont.-built Toyota Matrix begins its second generation in 2009 with the return of the all-wheel drive (AWD) option.

In addition to the reintroduction of the AWD option (it was dropped in 2007), the 2009 model also brings back the sporty XRS model.

The new generation has a lower stance than the previous model, but not at the expense of interior space. Inside, many changes have been made including redesigned seats for added comfort, the introduction of a three-spoke tilt/telescopic steering wheel and a new console design.

Similar to the Corolla, engine choices are the 1.8-litre and the 2.4-litre four-cylinder powerplants.

The AWD system is the same as the one in the RAV4 and works on-demand. All models have four-wheel disc brakes with an anti-lock braking system (ABS), electronic brake-force distribution (EBD) and brake assist (BA). Vehicle stability control and traction control are available on the XR and standard on the XRS.

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Do automobiles dream of electric drivetrains?

AutoPilot
Michael Goetz
Veteran auto journalist

I recently completed my first test drive in an all-electric vehicle.

I have no idea how many kilometres were possible with a full charge, because halfway through my test the salesman took the keys away. He also said if I ever came back to Toys "R" Us, and got on that pink Barbie Escalade again, he would call security.

I wish this guy had spoken with Larry Murphy, as I had. Then he might have better understood my desire to experience the electrical movement. Murphy is best described as GM's future strategist. His job is to predict what personal transportation will look like in the future and how GM might position itself in that future.

He noted that the DNA of the automobile hasn't changed much in 100 years. Internal combustion engine. Fuelled by some kind of petroleum product. Lots of on-board mechanical and hydraulic systems. This type of vehicle also operates independently of other vehicles — you have to pay attention to the car and to the traffic.

"A relatively dumb machine," says Murphy.

He believes that the automotive DNA is about to change, to one based around electrical drivetrains, and to one also based on the notion that vehicles will be connected to each other on a grid.

Not everyone agrees with Murphy, but the arguments for shaping cars around this model are compelling, even if you go beyond the obvious one of sustainable and clean energy consumption.

- Electric motors are small and do not need transmissions. This reduces weight and complexity. This also means less maintenance, not more.
- Electric cars have less inherent design constraints. Designers will be free to rethink what vehicle shapes are possible, and where to put people and their cargo.
- Electric cars can go really fast.
- If all the above works as advertised, and safety and environment issues are under control, then the "automakers" will be able to concentrate more on the fun side of personal transportation.

He figures they could eventually operate more like the fashion industry, and bring out fashionable exteriors and interiors almost on a seasonable basis.

Michael Goetz has been writing about cars and editing automotive publications for more than 20 years. He lives in Toronto with his family and a neglected 1967 Jaguar E-type.

Budget-friendly Washington, D.C.
Frommers' list of top destinations for 2009, which focuses on places that are affordable and interesting, is led by Washington, D.C.; the guide notes that almost every major attraction the city has to offer is free. **REUTERS**

Travel

Shaky future

The news that Waterford Wedgwood PLC, the makers of crystal and china, filed for bankruptcy protection this week leaves not only the future of employees and several venerable brands up in the air, but also the viability of one of Ireland's top tourist attractions. Visitors flocked to the firm's crystal plant in Waterford, southeast Ireland, to watch glassblowers and other master craftsmen ply their trade; waterfordvisitorcentre.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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JULIA DIMON/FOR METRO CANADA

Julia Dimon stands in front of Chernobyl's reactor No. 4, and takes a reading on her Geiger counter. Right, a rusting ferris wheel, part of a park that was to open the day after the nuclear disaster.

Chernobyl's ghostly remnants

TheTravelJunkie

The site of an infamous power plant may not be a likely place to spend your vacation but every year, curious tourists make their way to Chernobyl for a look at where the world's worst nuclear disaster took place.

On Apr. 26, 1986, at 1:23 a.m., reactor No. 4 exploded, releasing nearly nine tons of radioactive material into the environment. That's 90 times as much as the Hiroshima bomb. It contaminated the air, soil and water in parts of Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and Russia.

There are disputes surrounding the number of deaths the accident caused. The World Health Organization reports that fewer than 50 deaths can be directly attributed to that day, and predicts some 4,000 people could eventually die of radiation exposure released in the melt down. Greenpeace contends that the eventual fatalities will be closer to 93,000.

However, the contaminated zones are apparently safe enough for tourists to visit. (I'm not entirely convinced, I suppose I'll know for sure if I start glowing green.) There are several Kiev-based tour agencies that offer all-inclusive day trips to Chernobyl.

My own trip to the site began with a 120-kilometre drive from Kiev, to an area near the reactor called the exclusion zone. I presented my passport at a series of checkpoints, got a safety briefing, signed a waiver and drove through a deserted area.

Despite high levels of radiation, everything looked normal. The grass was a healthy shade of green, trees were full and leafy, bees were pollinating. Nature has been resilient — or it appears so, at any raate.

I hopped out of the van and stood in front of the infamous reactor. It was incredible how close I could get, considering there's still radioactive sludge brewing inside.

My Geiger counter was reading off the charts near patches of moss on the ground. Since the moss is soaked with radiation, tourists are warned against touching or standing on any clumps.

No eating, drinking or smoking either — although the tour group did end up drinking vodka with a guide who claimed it would protect against radiation poisoning.

Next was a visit to Pripyat, a town three kilometres away from the reactor, from which 45,000 people were evacuated following the disaster.

Walking around this abandoned city, I felt as if I were the last woman on earth. It was post-apocalyptic. Wilderness had taken over, dominating cement structures, causing them to crumble and crack like Roman ruins. Weeds pushed through floor boards and branches overtook ex-apartments.

Rusted cribs and burnt dolls were scattered around a former preschool. With school books strewn around the room and black boards still fresh with chalky arithmetic, the scene was a time capsule of Soviet-era life.

An amusement park, set to open the day after the nuclear explosion, was just a graveyard of rusting bumper cars and a lone ferris wheel.

The scariest part of the tour was learning that the "sarcophagus," a concrete-and-steel shell built to contain Reactor No. 4's radioactive spew, is leaking.

Our guide warned, that if the proper measurements aren't taken in the next few years to rebuild this deteriorating shelter, there's a real risk of a more severe Chernobyl-type disaster happening again.

Julia Dimon is co-host of Word Travels, airing on OLN, and editor of thetraveljunkie.ca.

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Ready, set — shop

Shoppers are set to storm Paris streets beginning on Wednesday for the start of the winter sales, with department stores such as Printemps slashing prices by up to 80 per cent to offload stock after grim Christmas trading. It will follow similar stampedes in London, New York and other shopping capitals. **REUTERS**

Hit the road on two wheels

Defy the economy by staying at hotels that offer bicycles to their guests

EMMA E. FORREST
Metro World News

Appealing to those caught up in the credit-crunch craze for saving money, some of the world's hippest big-city hotels are now offering fleets of bicycles for guests to use.

Opt for one of these hotels in the new year and not only will you save your cash and get a fresh perspective on the city, you'll fulfil your resolutions to be healthier and eco-aware in 2009.

Hotel du Nord

The intimate and charming Hotel du Nord in Paris is offering its answer to the city's famous Velibpay-per-ride bicycles with a fleet of 10 bikes for guests to ride free of charge; check out hoteldunord-leparivelo.com.

The Gansevoort South

The Gansevoort South in Miami is offering very cool glow-in-the-dark Puma bikes, perfect for guests planning to hit the city's famous nightspots; ganse voortsouth.com.

The Bowery NYC

In New York, you can pedal around Manhattan on a red Jamis earth cruiser if you stay at The Bowery NYC; theboweryhotel.com.

The James

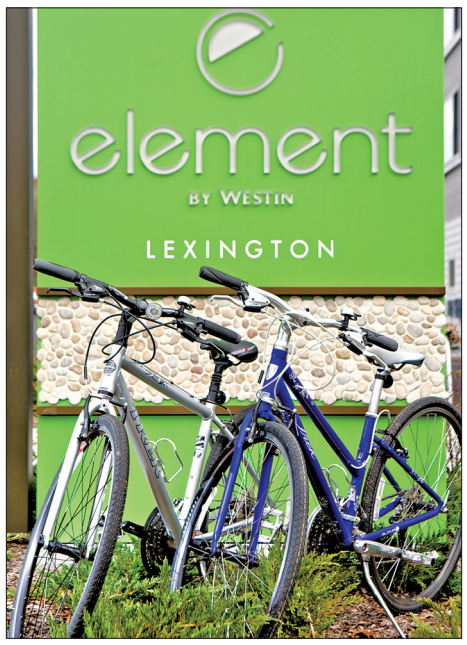
At The James in Chicago, you can ride bikes customized by kooky clothing brand Paul Frank; see jameshotels.com.

Element

Even hotel mega-chain, Starwood is offering free bikes at its new eco-friendly Element property. Guests can borrow Trek hybrid mountain/city bikes from their first hotel in the Boston suburb of Lexington; elementhotels.com.

Cash-saving tips

- Look for discounts at hotels during their off-peak time of the week. Business hotels offer great deals on weekends, and fancy weekend-break country hotels are often cheaper during the week.
- Avoid peak times in general — flights, hotels and packages are always pricier during school holidays.
- Live like a local. Eat in local cafés rather than touristy restaurants, and you'll enjoy more authentic cuisine as well as save cash. Use a local SIM card so you don't pay extortionate cellphone rates.
- Watch out for false economies. Your ultra-cheap flight can cost a fortune if you have to take a taxi to or from the airport if you fly or land at crazy times.



Big-city hotels that provide bicycles for guests to use include, clockwise from above left, The James in Chicago; Element, which is Starwood's new eco-friendly chain; The Gansevoort South in Miami and the Hotel du Nord in Paris.

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Travel Jan 19 - Feb 02/ac + taxes & fees $243

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Travel Feb 2 - Feb 23/ac + taxes & fees $407

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Bruce Lee home to become attraction
A philanthropic bid by a Hong Kong tycoon to preserve the one-time Kowloon residence of kung fu legend Bruce Lee and transform it into a major tourist attraction honouring the film icon was approved yesterday. **REUTERS**

Catch your breath in the desert

Hiking, healthy eats re-energize guests at Utah's Red Mountain Spa

ANNE DIMON/FOR METRO CANADA

Test your mountain legs and enjoy the scenery on one of Red Mountain Spa's gruelling treks.

ANNE DIMON
for Metro Canada

A couple of minutes into this two-hour hike, I'm thinking I could be in trouble. As someone who likes to consider herself a hard-core hiker, I'm not used to pulling up the tail end of a group. But there I was, notebook in hand, camera slung over my shoulders, slipping and sliding in the thick desert sand in an effort to just to keep up.

It didn't help that the lead guide on this trek — Red Mountain Spa's most challenging day hike — had recently run a 49-kilometre marathon in just four hours and 19 minutes.

Located in the southwestern Utah's Mohavi desert near the town of St. George and about a two-hour drive from the Las Vegas airport, the village-like enclave of Red Mountain Spa is set against a backdrop of dramatic, Navajo sandstone mountain peaks and canyons.

There's a palpable quiet here, as if the craggy, red rock cliffs provided a natural buffer from everyday hustle and bustle. It's an idyllic setting for what's known in the spa world as a "destination spa."

But funnily enough, it's not the spa itself that's the big attraction. It's the hiking. And the food.

When it comes to hiking, you can choose from a menu of about 30 different guided outings at various levels from novice hiker through the advanced Trekker 3, designed for those of us who prefer a little torture out on the trails.

Trekker 3 is the option that has me scrambling to keep up; today's session is more gruelling aerobic workout than an opportunity to gawk at the view, but thankfully, our guide allows us to take a few moments here and there to stop, catch our breath, have a sip of water and take in the dramatic scenery.

I was even more grateful to finally find my mountain legs, and I managed to complete the trek without feeling like the caboose.

Back at the resort, a healthy après-hike buffet awaited our return. And while healthy buffet may read like an oxymoron, at this all-inclusive resort the food is indeed both tasty and nutritious.

It's a good thing that the Red Mountain approach doesn't include starving yourself, because the resort's extensive array of fitness classes — everything from yoga and Pilates workshops to dance and water workouts — tend to give guests quite an appetite.

When not hiking, taking a fitness class or eating, guests can lounge by one of three swimming pools, take a meditative walk around the labyrinth or attend an educational class such as Chinese Medicine, Meditative Rituals and Food & Emotions.

There's a full schedule of optional activities led by instructors, and you can participate as much or as little as you want.

It's no surprise that Red Mountain Spa has won so many awards — it has pretty much everything one needs in a wellness retreat.

For proof of that, you just need to look at the number of return guests. Annette Anderson of Vail, Colo., for instance, has been here 10 times — "I come to re-energize myself and to get in shape with hiking," she says.

Indeed, the hiking options never seem to end. In addition to the Red Mountain hikes there are day trips, for an added cost, to Bryce Canyon and Zion National Park, which boast incredible vistas.

Anne Dimon is a spa and wellness travel writer and editor of traveltowellness.com.

Getting there

- For more information on Red Mountain Spa, visit redmountainspa.com
- WestJet offers daily nonstop flights to Las Vegas from Toronto and eight other cities across Canada; westjet.com

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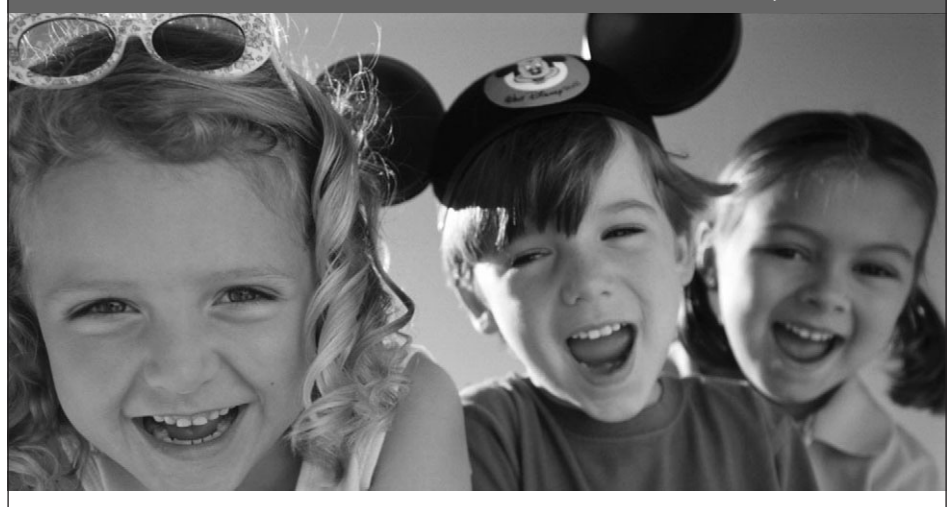

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Prices excluding $3.50/$1000 of travel services representing the clients' contribution to the "*Fonds d'indemnisation des clients des agents de voyages" (Indemnity Fund).*

Polanski wants sex case moved from Los Angeles
Roman Polanski, who last month moved to have a decades-old charge of unlawful intercourse with a minor dismissed, filed a motion this week to have the entire case removed from the Los Angeles Superior Court system and handed to the California Judicial Council for review. **EONLINE.COM**

Entertainment

Celebrity split
Medium star Patricia Arquette has filed for divorce from her husband of more than two years, actor Thomas Jane, Los Angeles court papers filed Monday reveal. **PEOPLE.COM**

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Dearest Ottawa, January, 2009

It has been a long time since we last corresponded.

We've been through a lot together - dear Queen Victoria passed on, we experienced two World Wars and weathered through a Great Depression. The Ottawa Senators played their first game, women earned the right to vote and personal computers became household necessities.

Through it all, we've both evolved with the times while preserving our heritage and I am pleased to remain a close companion of yours.

The Arts are still an integral part of your culture and I am delighted to offer an array of seasonal courses and credit programs to suit your needs.

Please don't be a stranger and pay me a visit every now and then – I'd love to show you one of my free galleries and of course, for you it is always complimentary. Do keep in touch – the past 130 years are only the beginning.

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Accents: To fake or not

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Of all the criticism that Tom Cruise has received for playing a German soldier in his latest thriller Valkyrie, the one that stands out is for his lack of a Bavarian accent.

"It seems to be the point of contention that will not die and frankly if that's the problem (critics) have, I'm happy," stated screenwriter and co-producer Christopher McQuarrie in a recent interview.

"I'd much rather have them attack me than the people in the story."

But that's precisely the point that's unclear — do fake accents detract audiences from the story? While critics have blasted Valkyrie and its use of American, English and German actors speaking in their own dialect as distracting, McQuarrie argues the opposite.

"Everybody walking around speaking these German accents, it starts to feel a little bit like a Mel Brooks comedy," said McQuarrie. "We just said, 'It seems to me that this is a human story as much as it is a German story and can we just dispense with the absurdity?'"

Lev Schreiber, left, and Daniel Craig in a scene from Defiance.

Many filmmakers would debate that argument. Director Edward Zwick, who later this month will be releasing Defiance starring Daniel Craig (better known as James Bond), is one. For his drama about a group of war-time Russian resistance fighters, the accent was absolutely necessary.

"We had a cast made of Americans, Australians, English, Lithuanians, Russians and for everyone to speak with a different accent would've been entirely weird to me," Zwick said.

The Blood Diamond director also insists that adopting the native accent in which a film is set isn't just for the benefit of authenticity either.

"I think it might've helped Daniel disappear into the part — some people's perceptions of James Bond and a lot of that (needs to) happen very quickly."

Still, getting it right is imperative. Actors who mangle dialects are vilified by critics. No matter how slick a flick is otherwise, a movie lives and dies by its character's believability.

It causes one to consider: To fake an accent or not to fake an accent, that's the question. For the makers of Valkyrie, the answer comes without regret.

"I'm quite certain that the half of the audience that doesn't have a problem with it would be mocking us now for the outrageous German accents," said McQuarrie, before adding. "I'll take the half that I agree with."

Travolta's spirit is immortal, Scientology says

John Travolta's son Jett, who died of a seizure last week at age 16, will live on as an immortal spiritual being, according to the beliefs of the Church of Scientology which counts the actor and his wife as prominent supporters.

Jett Travolta is expected to be given a Scientology service this week upon his family's return to their Florida home. An autopsy was performed on Monday, but officials in the Bahamas where he died did not release the results.

Jett Travolta

Celebrity television show Entertainment Tonight said the body was cremated late on Monday prior to the journey back to Florida, but that could not be immediately confirmed.

Outwardly, a Scientology funeral consists of practices including eulogies, music, and burial or cremation associated with other mainstream religions, a spokesman at the Church of Scientology headquarters in Los Angeles. But Scientologists do not believe in heaven or hell, although a central belief is the idea that individuals have lived before and will live again, Tommy Davis said. "There is no concept of heaven and hell. (But) a Scientologist is interested in the future, and in future generations and making a world that is better," Davis said. **REUTERS**

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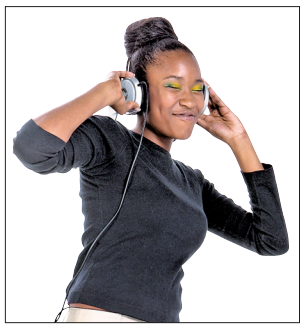
Ferguson announces surprise wedding
Craig Ferguson made a surprise announcement on his CBS Late Late Show Monday night: He got married over the holidays. Ferguson, 46, wed his longtime girlfriend Megan Wallace Cunningham, an art dealer. **PEOPLE.COM**

Music business explores ways to reach women



Tara Leigh Music Party and musicShop, both launched in November, target female music buyers.

MUSIC With CD sales dropping fast, the music business is exploring nontraditional ways to expose consumers to recording artists. Among the new sales and marketing vehicles are Tara Leigh Music Party and musicShop.

Both launched in November to target female music buyers. Tara Leigh is part of House Party, an Irvington, N.Y., company that stages Tupperware party-like events that consumer brands sponsor at private homes.

MusicShop, run by Sherman Oaks, California, music branding company Musica, is a featured section of Shop.com, the comparison-shopping engine.

Through Tara Leigh, former EMI marketing executive Josh Zieman organized 2,500 listening parties at homes throughout the United States. The gatherings attracted a total of 42,000 people, 88 per cent of them female.

Tara Leigh grew out of Zieman's experience at EMI. He was vice-president of marketing at the Manhattan label group before heading up business development operations at a Toronto-based digital media company in 2007.

"We were trying to reach adults and market music to them," he recalled. "We looked at the direct-sales market, which is a multi-billion-dollar business, and wondered if you could sell music in that model."

House Party provides one such way to reach women in their living rooms. To launch Tara Leigh, Zieman printed 35,000 catalogs featuring 100 titles from 15 record labels, including albums by such names as Harry Connick Jr., Faith Hill, Enya and Tina Turner. **REUTERS**

3-D TV tech is not the answer

IntelleVision

Rick McGinnis
rick.mcginnis@metronews.ca

RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Philips has announced a glasses-free 3-D display, but our columnist questions why viewers are expected to respond more to 3-D images as opposed to better stories or access to more shows?

THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOUR SET: There are some deep and serious changes happening to the way people watch TV, changes that are beyond the control of the people who make and broadcast the shows.

The essence of the change is choice, as viewers demand more of it in their selection of shows to watch, and in the technology they use to help expand their choices beyond what's offered by the networks, and when. The industry seems to sense that technology is playing a part, but if two recent stories are any indicator, they're acting true to form and missing the plot entirely.

The Los Angeles Times reported that the Consumer Electronics Show running this week in Las Vegas will showcase 3-D TV technology from companies like Panasonic, Samsung and Texas Instruments, hoping to bring into the home the new 3-D technologies behind limited release versions of movies like Bolt, Beowulf, and Journey To The Center Of The Earth.

3-D's first heyday in the '50s produced more kitsch than art in its brief heyday. It's a legacy that comes bundled with every pair of 3-D glasses, as acknowledged by a Texas Instruments executive who told the Times that "unlike earlier attempts, it's not just gimmick to try to sell a bad horror movie."

It's those glasses, however — so easy to lose or break — that are probably 3-D's biggest obstacle. Take it from me, nobody wears glasses because they want to, and they're a constant reminder of the novelty aspect of 3-D, and the goofy and abject relationship a viewer is forced to adopt with the technology. Even though Philips has announced a glasses-free 3-D display, the question no one has been able to answer is why, particularly, viewers will respond more to 3-D imagery as opposed to better stories, or simple access to more shows.

Then there's the news in Broadcasting & Cable magazine that this month will see the debut of HD Seinfeld episodes from CBS. Once again, no one has bothered to explain why being able to pick out the pattern on Kramer's Hawaiian shirts will enhance the show's comedy. It's the same mistake the music industry made in the '90s, assuming that consumers wanted higher fidelity while pushing formats like SACD, as they opted for MP3s that could be downloaded in minutes or seconds, and it looks like the industry will chase the wild goose again, pushing high tech formats while its audience is happily watching lo-fi avi files on their laptops.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

Shameless gets American version

NEW SERIES HBO has teamed up with ER executive producer John Wells to develop an American version of the acclaimed British comedy-drama Shameless.

Based on the childhood of its creator, writer Paul Abbott, the original Shameless chronicles a dysfunctional working-class clan led by an alcoholic patriarch. It has aired in the United States on BBC America and Sundance Channel. **REUTERS**

In brief

ACTOR Emmy winner Christine Lahti is returning to the medical genre with USA Network's 90-minute pilot Operating Instructions. **REUTERS**

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt

Kenya Hunt, exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

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OT	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 1/7/09	265	353	2	TVO	Galapagos (Part 1 of 3)		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		New Tricks "Mad Dogs"		Human Edge		
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Bones (HDTV PA)		Bones (HDTV PA)		House		News (N)
	-	-	5	SRC	Virginie (SC)	L'Épicerie (N)	Le Match des étoiles (N) (SC)		Les Galas 2007 du Festival		Le Téléjournal et Les Nou		La Zone
	209	342	6	CHRO	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Old Christine	Old Christine	Sarah Connor Chronicles		Law & Order "Chattel"		News (N)
	196	311	7	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Law & Order: SVU		*Of Murder and Memory* (2008, Drama) Annabeth Gish.				News (N)
	208	303	8	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Just for Laughs		CBC News: the fifth estate (N)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Knight Rider (HDTV) (N)		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order "Chattel"		News (N)
	117	713	10	TVA	Poule-oeufs or	Sketch Show	Destinées (HDTV) (SC)		Deux filles le matin (SC)		TVA 22 heures	(10:45) *Le Majestic* (2001)	
	-	-	11	QS	Chemin du golf	Rire et délire	Wipeout (N) (SC)		Bob Gratton	Bob Gratton	Cent dix pour cent (SC)		Msr Showbiz
	137	763	12	TFO	Le Printemps des Voyageurs		L'Inquisition révélée		*La Montagne de Baya* (1997, Drame) Ouardia Kessi.				Évolution
	-	362	13	CBS	Dr. Phil (HDTV) (N)		Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	The 35th Annual People's Choice Awards (HDTV) (Live)				Two/Half Men
	216	395	14	OMN2	Cold Case "Joseph"		News (N)		News (N)		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		13: Fear Is Real (N)		Hates Chris	Friends	I Love Money		News (N)
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere Il	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	218	345	18	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	Knight Rider (HDTV) (N)		The 35th Annual People's Choice Awards (HDTV)				News (N)
	-	361	20	ABC	News (N)	Entertainment	Scrubs	Scrubs	20/20 (HDTV) (N)		Barbara Walters Special		News (N)
	512	396	24	CPAC	La Période de questions		Heure polit.	L'Heure politique				Revue	Période-quest.
	651	355	25	CTS	Happy Days	Laverne	Michael Coren Show		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	Bones (HDTV PA)		Bones (HDTV PA)		News (N)		News
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Energy Efficie	WPBS Live!		Great Performances (HDTV) Kevin Kline stars as Cyrano de Bergerac. (N)				
	205	312	104	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Law & Order: SVU		*Of Murder and Memory* (2008, Drama) Annabeth Gish.				News (N)
news	502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Newman	The Hour		CBC News: The National		Fast Food Junkies		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
sports	406	417	27	net	World Combat League		The Ultimate Fighter		Best Damn Sports Show		Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	400	280	30	TSN	That's Hockey!	NHL Hockey Montreal Canadiens at New York Rangers. (HDTV) (Live)					SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)		
	410	403	52	SCR	College Basketball Davidson at Duke. (Live)				NBA Basketball Miami Heat at Denver Nuggets. (Live)				
	411	457	56	OLN	Bounty Hunter	Dakar Rally	Survivorman		Mantracker		Bounty Hunter	Dakar Rally	Survivorman
	417	406	59	SC	Pinks (HDTV)	Pass Time	Am. Thunder	Am. Thunder	Pinks	Pinks Outtakes	Wrecked	Wrecked	Pinks
family	554	544	48	TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6teen	6teen	Misadventures	Futurama	The Critic	Robot Chicken	Bromwell High
	557	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	551	542	65	YTV	Scorpion	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Adrenaline Proj	Prank Patrol	Falcon Beach		Mystery Hnt.
cable variety	570	580	29	MM	mmmtop	MusicProfile	Where You At	Revival	Back In	Back In	All-Time Top 10		Fabulous Life
	615	520	31	A&E	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Dog the Bounty Hunter		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Parking Wars
	628	584	32	SPKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		UFC's Ultimate Fight Night				Unleashed
	521	560	34	TLC	Mystery Diagnosis		Extreme Forensics		Solved "Broken Vows"		Personal Justice (N)		Ext. Forensics
	145	761	35	TV5	Humanima	Mixeur	*Une vie à t'attendre* (2004, Drame sentimental)			Foie de canard	Peur	Voyageur	Journal TV5
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		About a Girl	About a Girl	The Guard		Big Love		House
	620	523	40	BVO	The Achievers	Landscape	Arts & Minds	Bravo!Videos	Wingfield	Wingfield	Très Portugal	Art is a Mirror	Law & Order
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)		Dirty Jobs		Deadliest Catch		Mayday "Falling From the Sky"		Daily Planet
	575	583	43	CMT	CMT's Greatest		Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Great Big Sea
	601	562	45	SLC	Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	X-Weighted		Real Housewives of OC		Filthy Rich: Cattle Drive		ET Canada
	625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Comedy Inc.	RENO 911!	Daily Show
	294	529	47	TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	*Air Force One* ★★★ (1997, Suspense) Harrison Ford, Gary Oldman.					Seinfeld	Family Guy
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Mansions	Property Shop	Property Virgin	Unsellable	Hid Potential	Really Big Flip	Holmes-Homes
	627	528	50	SPC	Lost "Greatest Hits"		Lost (Part 1 of 2)		The Dresden Files		Rabbit Fall	Rabbit Fall	Stargate SG-1
	581	566	53	MTV	Mom & Dad	After	MTV News	Cribs	Bromance		The Real World (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Reality	Ad Persuasion	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	522	506	55	HIS	NCIS "Hiatus"		Cities of the Underworld		The Real Da Vinci Code		NCIS "Hiatus"		Unlocking-Past
	129	773	60	CD	Excès de stars		Enfants médiums		S O S (HDTV)		Crimes passionnels		Vidéo
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		Summer Wine	Dinnerladies	Darling Buds of May		John and Yoko: Peace		Poltergeist
	602	567	62	W	Will & Grace	Friends	Grocery Bag	Grocery Bag	How Clean	Too Posh	Maxed Out (N)	Body Rev	Maxed Out
	269	350	70	APTN	Canadian Geographic		Reservation Soldiers		APTN National News: Contact		Tribal Treks	Guides	Wings-Canada
	621	527	71	TLK	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		TMZ (N)	etalk	In Style Celebrity Weddings		The Tonight Show-Jay Leno		TMZ
	603	561	95	FN	Chef at Home	Chef at Home	Restaurant Makeover		Iron Chef America		Top Chef "Focus Group"		Restaurant

critics'corner

The 35th Annual People's Choice Awards
You picked them; now watch them collect their prizes. As the name makes clear, fan votes determine the winners of these awards, which cover movies, music and television. Acting nominees include Kate Hudson, Anne Hathaway, Will Smith, Hugh Laurie and the late Heath Ledger. Up for honors in the music categories are Rihanna, Alicia Keys, Carrie Underwood, Chris Brown and more. Queen Latifah - a nominee for favorite leading lady — returns as host. 9 PM on 13 CBS 18 E!

Maxed Out
It's only natural for parents to want to give their kids everything they didn't have. But one thing many parents forget to give their children is an understanding of money and budgeting. When you combine kids who think money grows on trees and parents who hate to say no, the result can be disaster. In this new episode, host Alison Griffiths tries to help one such family take control of its spending and teach the kids a few lessons about money. 10 PM on 62 W

Leona puts on writer's hat

Leona Lewis is to publish her autobiography. The Bleeding Love singer, 23, has signed a book deal with Hodder and Stoughton to reveal the story of her rise to worldwide fame. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Celebrity Buzz

Lindsay denies breakup rumours

RELATIONSHIP Lindsay Lohan strongly denied media reports she has split with Samantha Ronson, people.com reports. In a MySpace Celebrity Blog posting under "rumors," the actress writes, "Little piece of TRUE information: We did NOT break up!"

Lohan, 22, tells media outlets reporting the split, "Get your stories straight please. It's really annoying to have all of your friends emailing you saying, i saw, i read, etc ... NOT TRUE."

She signs the post with a happy face and "xoxox Lindsay," people.com adds.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Kate overjoyed for ex, new dad Armstrong

PEOPLE Kate Hudson couldn't be more thrilled for former fling Lance Armstrong, who is expecting a child with girlfriend Anna Hansen, usmagazine.com reports.

Asked if she's happy for her ex, she told the website at Monday's Bride Wars premiere in New York, "Of course! Oh, yeah!"

Hudson also said her new "I Do!" comedy hasn't made her want to wed again. (She split from ex-husband Chris Robinson in 2006.)

"I'm a girl. I think all girls, deep down, have that fairy tale thing," she said, adding that she already had her dream wedding. "I was so in love. It was such an amazing day — and it should be," she added. "Relationships and love should be celebrated."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Amy's holiday fling?

PEOPLE For a change of pace, Amy Winehouse is looking fit in 2009 as she enjoys the Caribbean sunshine alongside a sporty hunk, people.com reports.

The website noted the multiple Grammy Award winner, 25, has been pictured on the arm of former rugby player Joshua Bowman as she continues her vacation in St. Lucia.

Bowman, who is quoted in the U.K.'s Daily Mail saying, "She's just a cool girl, very nice, and we're just very friendly," is said to be on the island with his mother and sister. He is a former player with rugby team Saracens and has since turned to acting.

People.com adds that he said of his new friend, "She's a good laugh — she is such a lovely girl and on great form. I can't say much more than that."

Some reports are calling her friendship with Bowman a "holiday romance." The actor's reps had no further comment.

Winehouse, who has been plagued with ill health for much of 2008, has been seen kicking a soccer ball around the beach and running on the sands — clearly loving the life away from the turmoil of her life back in the U.K. that has seen her husband Blake Fielder-Civil jailed.

Winehouse's U.K. rep Chris Goodman is also not commenting on Bowman and he cannot confirm some reports that she and Fielder-Civil have split. Some people close to her expect them to be together when he leaves jail.

"She has been enjoying herself on her break and meeting lots of new people. There are many like-minded people there having extended breaks. Amy is a friendly person and very sociable and behaving exactly as I would expect her to do," Goodman says.

Winehouse keeps extending her time in the Caribbean, but must be back in Europe for a court appearance in Norway on Jan. 12, people.com adds.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

'I used to be a hooligan'

PEOPLE Noel Gallagher used to be a soccer hooligan, according to female-first.co.uk.

The Oasis guitarist confessed his lifestyle used to be even more turbulent before he became a rock star when he went to Manchester City games with notoriously dangerous gangs including Mayne Line Crew, Under-5s and Young Guvnors.

He said: "I knew all that lot and I still see a few of them today. They were quite mad times. Half of us were on the dole.

"The grounds we used to go to 20 years ago were dangerous, especially night games at Leeds and places like that, and wondering whether or not you'd make it home in one piece."

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Noel also revealed how his love for sport inspired his music career when he united the crowd in song at the Kippax stand at his team's old ground Maine Road.

The 41-year-old rocker, who played live at the famous stadium at the peak of Oasis' '90s popularity, added to Britain's The Sun newspaper: "I did start a song in the Kippax when I'd had a drink. Probably something like, Everywhere We Go or similar and everyone joined in.

"So maybe the first seeds of my songwriting career were sown at the back of the Kippax."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Stunts cause Jackman family strife

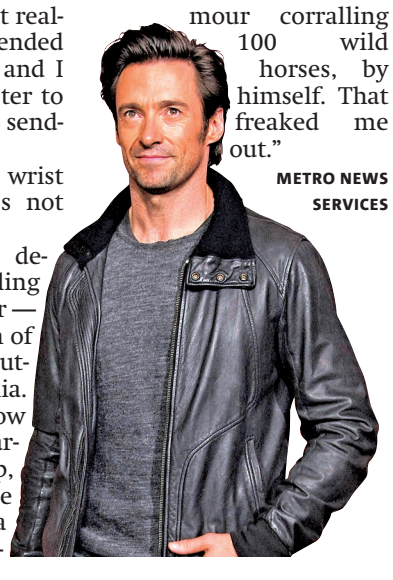
PEOPLE Hugh Jackman is being held responsible for breaking his brother-in-law's leg, wrist and nose, femalefirst.co.uk is reporting.

The gossip website says the Australia actor's sister Sonya banned him from using her husband Richard as his stunt double after he broke so many bones on set.

Hugh, 40, said: "My brother-in-law has doubled for me in a few of my movies. It's a weird situation, though, because things can go wrong.

"One time on Van Helsing he was doubling for me in a scene where I got really thrown about. He ended up breaking his leg and I had to phone my sister to explain and say I was sending him home.

"He's cracked his wrist and nose, too. She's not best pleased."



Hugh recently described how gruelling his role as The Drover — an Australian version of a cowboy — was in outback drama Australia.

He said: "This is how they describe my character's horsemanship, The Drover, astride his horse like a knight in shining armour corralling 100 wild horses, by himself. That freaked me out."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Brit falls prey to Twitter pranksters

PEOPLE Britney Spears has been targeted by online pranksters who have crudely mocked her private parts, female-first.co.uk reports. The Womanizer singer was left red-faced when the upsetting message was posted on her account on networking site Twitter.

Twitter officials were quick to take down the offensive message, and insist they are working to make Twitter more secure, the gossip site says.

A notice on the site read: "A number of high-profile Twitter accounts were compromised this morning, and fake/spam updates were sent on their behalf. We have identified the cause and blocked it. We are working to restore compromised accounts."

Britney is not the only famous face to have her Twitter account hijacked. Others to fall foul of jokers include U.S. president-elect Barack Obama, political commentator Bill O'Reilly and U.S. newsreader Rick Sanchez.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Smokes and drinks for unpregnant Moss

PEOPLE Kate Moss seems to have put an end to rumours that she is pregnant by smoking and drinking on holiday, female-first.co.uk reports.

The supermodel has been snapped puffing on cigarettes and drinking beer while sunning herself in Thailand with boyfriend Jamie Hince and daughter Lila Grace.

She has however been seen patting her belly and wearing loose fitting clothing leaving onlookers confused but we think it's safe to say she is not with child, femalefirst.co.uk adds.

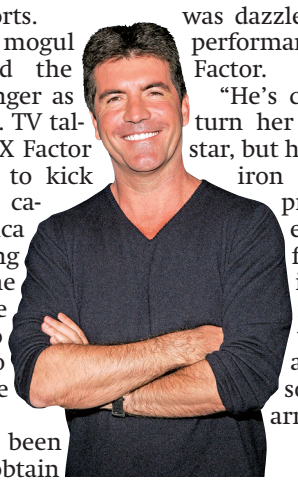
The baby rumours began in December when Kate and Jamie were said to have gathered friends and family at their home for a big announcement. She was said to have announced that she wasn't pregnant but at the time not everyone was convinced. The latest snaps seem to confirm this though, the website says.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Cowell helps singer Cole

PEOPLE Simon Cowell has hired a team of top lawyers to help get Cheryl Cole a U.S. working visa, female-first.co.uk reports.

The music mogul — who hired the Girls Aloud singer as a judge on U.K. TV talent show The X Factor — is so keen to kick start the star's career in America he is doing everything he can to convince authorities to allow her to sing in the country.



Cheryl has been struggling to obtain the essential paperwork after being convicted of assault in 2003.

A source said: "Simon was dazzled by Cheryl's performance on The X Factor.

"He's certain he can turn her into a global star, but he just needs to iron out her visa problem. He's employed a firm of experts in Miami and is confident they will be able to reach some kind of arrangement."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

The Weather Network
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Today 90% 5-10cm of snow -4° / -8°
Thursday 90% 1-3cm of snow -3° / -13°
Friday Variable -10° / -18°

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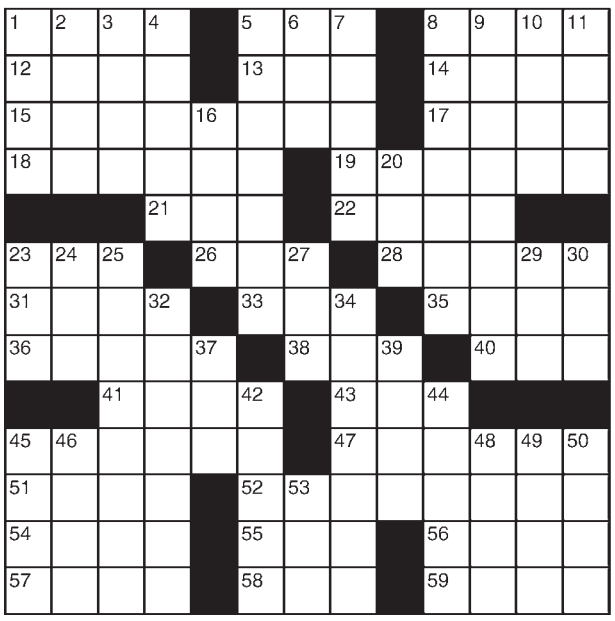
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Basilica section
5 Chart
8 Pinnacle
12 Like some dorms
13 Lamb's dam
14 Gunky stuff
15 Trouble
17 Low-voiced woman
18 Seinfeld role
19 Skips a phoneme
21 Neither mate
22 Galvanization matter
23 Bonfire residue
26 Bottom line
28 "The Lord is my shepherd, ..." e.g.
31 Italy's silhouette
33 Party bowlful
35 Despot
36 Contestant's postcard
38 Glutton
40 Type squares
41 Sought restitution
43 Chic, to Austin Powers
45 Antiknock rating
47 Blood fluids
51 Avoid at all costs
52 Loss of courage
54 Took a powder
55 Citric beverage
56 Unravel
57 Dispatches, mob-style
58 "Of course"
59 Harvard rival

Crossword down

1 Rue the run
2 Motel amenity
3 — good example
4 Buzz Aldrin's real name
5 Preprinted, as postage
6 Shock partner
7 Actress Rosie
8 Opposing
9 Unsolved mystery
10 Speck
11 Grand verse
16 Unsigned (Abbr.)
20 Back talk
23 $5 portrait
24 Bart, to Homer
25 Something exceptionally good
27 Gratuity
29 Felon's flight
30 — Doubtfire
32 Those favoring a classless society?
34 Zits
37 Longing
39 Prospector's hope
42 Rot
44 Cartoon duck
45 Scandinavian city
46 Swedish Muppet
48 Antitoxins
49 Repast
50 Eyelid woe
53 Rhyming tribute

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone — one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	7	9	6		8			2
	6	8						5
3			1					
8	3				6			
	2	4				6	5	
			4				1	7
					1			8
4						5	3	
2			3		5	7	9	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

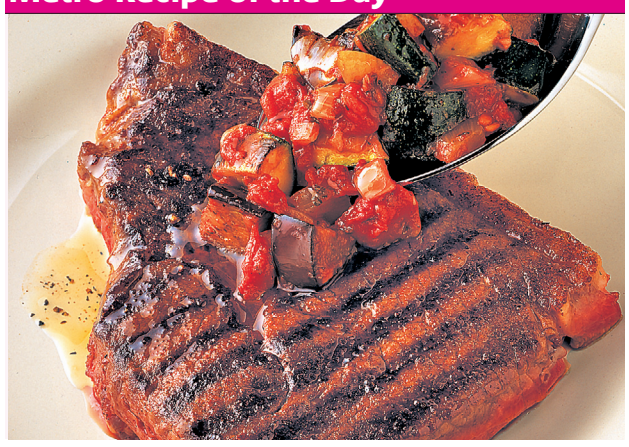
M	O	T	H	■	S	P	A	■	R	A	Y	S		
A	C	R	E	■	P	A	S	■	O	G	E	E		
S	H	A	M	R	O	C	K	■	C	U	T	E		
T	O	Y	■	I	R	E	■	S	K	E	I	N		
■	■	■	C	O	T	■	W	I	N	■	■	■		
L	I	G	H	T	■	B	O	R	R	O	W	S		
A	V	E	R	■	Y	A	K	■	O	B	O	E		
D	E	N	I	Z	E	N	■	F	L	I	N	T		
■	■	■	S	A	W	■	N	I	L	■	■	■		
S	H	A	R	P	■	C	A	N	■	Y	E	S		
N	O	L	O	■	R	O	C	K	W	E	L	L		
O	P	E	C	■	C	A	R	■	A	L	S	O		
W	E	E	K	■	A	L	E	■	G	L	E	E		

6	5	7	3	2	9	8	4	1
3	9	4	1	6	8	7	5	2
1	8	2	5	4	7	3	9	6
4	2	8	9	1	6	5	3	7
9	7	1	2	3	5	4	6	8
5	3	6	8	7	4	2	1	9
7	6	5	4	8	1	9	2	3
2	1	9	7	5	3	6	8	4
8	4	3	6	9	2	1	7	5

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:
Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Spiced steak with speedy ratatouille

INGREDIENTS:
4 tbsp (60 ml) olive oil
3 shallots
2 cloves garlic
1 lb (500 g) zucchini
2/3 lb (300 g) baby, or small, eggplants
1/2 tsp (2 ml) dried thyme
1/2 tsp (2 ml) dried oregano
4 tbsp (60 ml) red wine
1 can (19 oz/540 ml) chopped tomatoes
2 tbsp (25 ml) tomato paste
Salt
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) ground paprika
1/2 tsp (2 ml) cayenne pepper
4 sirloin or rump steaks, about 6 oz (170 g) each

METHOD:
1. Heat 2 tbsp (25 ml) oil in large saucepan. Peel and chop shallots and garlic, add to the pan, and cook over a moderate heat for 3-4 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, rinse, dry, and trim zucchinis and eggplants and cut into 1/2 in. (1 cm) chunks. Stir into shallots with thyme and oregano, and cook gently for 5 minutes.
3. Add wine, tomatoes and juice, tomato paste and a little salt, then cover and simmer gently for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until vegetables have softened.
4. While ratatouille is cooking, put spices into small bowl, add pinch of salt, and mix together. Season steaks on both sides with spice mixture.
5. Heat remaining olive oil in heavy-based frying pan until faint haze rises, then fry steaks for 4-4 1/2 minutes per side for rare steak, 5 1/2–6 for medium-rare or 6–8 1/2 for well done, depending on meat's thickness. Serve with ratatouille.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Worrying interrupts your work time. You have to please a VIP. A dim-witted man will jump to conclusions.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
A superbly cynical person will fail. Call someone to express your respect. Going through a crisis is exasperating.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Make a good deal with a tough call. It's time to face the truth about indecision. Don't be confrontational with the wrong person.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A simple error creates chaos. Stop chasing an impossible dream. Angry people will be astounded by a strange person.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
You can influence the public. Don't defeat yourself by being naive. A misplaced shoe will waste time.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
You'll appreciate what an older person says. A phobia can be fixed by a professional. You'll make a discovery when everybody talks at once.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Your positive attitude will lift everyone's spirits. A stubborn person will support you. Don't lose your temper due to a quarrel.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
A guilty person avoids punishment again. An unemployed person is shaken by bureaucracy. An informer will come to your rescue.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
An important man is being nagged. An upset friend will make a truce. A complicated argument will make you laugh.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
You might escape from a passionate fascination. A business problem will develop later on. A charismatic person is oblivious to everyone.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Avoid causing resentment in a family. A significant event will be mystifying. Make a decision about a troublemaker.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A committed shopper finds a remarkable bargain. Reassure a fearful person. You can enjoy a fated encounter.

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